

May 20, 1999

7824 '99 MAY 26 AIO:59

To The FDA,

ThankYou for taking time to read my letter.

"To confine, whom nature has given the urge to scratch, to perch, to flap her wings, to take dust baths, in a wire cage in which she cannot do any of these things, IS REVOLTINGLY CRUEL..." John Seymour in Self-Sufficiency.

I, Wendy Fodness, have raised, cared for and loved my own hens. Each have a personality and they are nice. I beg you to help the U.S.A. move away from the battery system. I am going to do everything I can to encourage people not to buy grocery store eggs. Please find it in your heart to feel sympathy for these abused, battered and often diseased birds. Help them first by granting petition Docket # 98P-0203/CP. Then further by striving to return to at least semi-free-range systems.

98P-0203

Very Sincerely, C1489

Wendy Fodness

HER EGGS ARE LAID IN PAIN

Caged without exercise while drained of calcium for eggshells, the battery hen develops the severe osteoporosis of confinement known as **Caged Layer Fatigue** whereby millions of hens become paralyzed and die of hunger and thirst inches from their food and water.



Relentless manipulation has forced her to produce an abnormal number of eggs - 250 a year compared to the 12 to 24 eggs a year laid by her wild relatives. The beauty and peace of laying an egg has been stripped by modern genetics and caging to a squalid discharge devoid of dignity and full of suffering. Researchers have described the frustrated attempts of caged hens to build nests and their frantic efforts to escape the cage by jumping at the bars right up to the laying of the egg.

Battery hens suffer from the horrible diseases of female birds denied exercise, including an ugly new disease called **Fatty Liver Hemorrhagic**



Syndrome characterized by an enlarged, fat, friable liver covered with blood clots. In recent decades hens' oviducts have become infested with salmonellae that enter the forming egg causing food poisoning in many consumers of eggs. Toxic ammonia rising from the mounds of manure beneath the cages causes ammonia-burned eyes, blindness, and chronic respiratory disease in millions of hens. Even small amounts of ammonia can be absorbed by an egg.

Every year in the U.S. millions of hens are brutally **Force Molted** to adjust egg prices: **the producer deliberately starves the hens for a week or more to force them to stop laying.** Eating itself is a torment. To reach the trough, the hen must stretch her neck repeatedly across a fence that in time wears away her neck feathers and causes throat blisters, while the fine mash particles, unsuited to a chicken's mouth and oral hygiene, draw bacteria causing painful mouth ulcers.

HER MOUTH IS PAINFULLY MUTILATED

The battery hen is **debeaked** once, usually twice in the course of her young life, resulting in lifelong pain researchers compare to human phantom limb and stump pain. The hot blade cuts through the sensitive beak tissue impairing the hen's ability to eat, drink, and preen properly. Beak mutilation is done to reduce the effects of compulsive pecking of birds intended by nature to search and peck actively for food, not

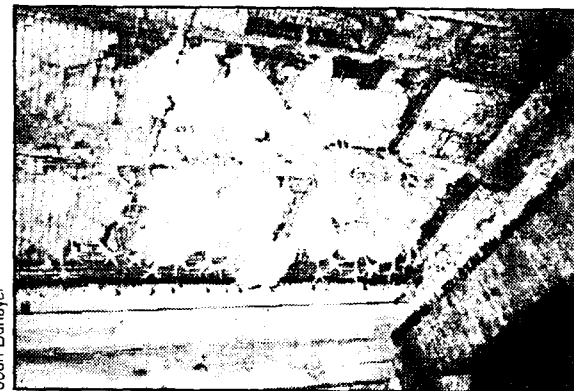
Researchers have described the frustrated attempts of caged hens to build nests and their frantic efforts to escape the cage by jumping at the bars right up to the laying of the egg.

sit in prison; and to save "feed costs," because debeaked birds can't grasp their food with the efficiency of an intact bird.

Diseases of Poultry [1991] has described a new human-created pecking pathology in caged hens: "**The**

area about the eyes is black and blue due to subcutaneous hemorrhage, wattles are dark and swollen with extravasated blood, and ear lobes are black and necrotic."

At the end of a year or two, the hens are ripped from the battery to the transport cages. Many bones are broken. Half-naked from feather loss, depleted of calcium, and terrorized by a lifetime of abuse, many hens



in transit embody a state of fear so intense they are paralyzed at the slaughterhouse. Prior to head cutting, done without benefit of stunning in the U.S., the hens are a mass of oozing abscesses, tumors, internal hemorrhages, and flaccid fat making them fit only for shredding into products that hide the true state of their flesh and their lives: chicken soups, pies, school lunches and other programs devised by the egg industry to dump dead laying hens onto consumers in diced up form.

"I recently purchased two 'spent' battery hens, Claire & Susie. My heart would break when I picked them up to put them into the henhouse at night. Their bones were so soft and fragile I thought they would break. BUT ... four weeks later they are holding their own and on the mend! An ode to the indomitable spirit and will to live of these extraordinary beings. As I write this they are outside the window having the time of their lives in a dustbath."

Patty Mark,
"Freedom for Battery Hens"



Photos Clyde Lassell

"The hen is rich in comfortable sounds and a kind of sweet singing that is full of contentment when she is clustered together with her sisters and brothers in a huddle of peace and well-being waiting for darkness to envelop them."

Historian Page Smith,
from *The Chicken Book*

WHAT CAN I DO?

To date, there are no federal welfare laws regulating the treatment of chickens in the United States. While working to enact laws to ban the debeaking, mass starvation, and battery caging of hens in the U.S., and to enact humane slaughter legislation for poultry in the U.S., consumers should permanently boycott battery eggs and discover the variety of egg-free alternatives. Contact **United Poultry Concerns, P.O. Box 59367, Potomac, MD 20859** for information including our unique cookbook, *Instead of Chicken, Instead of Turkey: A Poultryless 'Poultry' Potpourri*. \$11.95

- I wish to join UPC and receive the quarterly POULTRYPRESS Newsletter and other timely announcements — \$25 a year.
- I wish to make a tax deductible contribution to further UPC's vital work on behalf of domestic fowl.

(Please check the appropriate box.)

\$20 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐

\$100 ☐ \$500 ☐

Other _____

United Poultry Concerns is a non-profit organization promoting the compassionate and respectful treatment of domestic fowl.



THE BATTERY HEN:

Her Life Is Not For the Birds

The modern hen laying eggs for human consumption is far removed from the world of sunlight, soil, fresh air and grass where she belongs. Instead she lives jammed inside a little wire battery cage with 3 to 8 other tormented hens amid stacks of cages in filthy sheds holding 50,000 to 125,000 debeaked, terrified, bewildered birds. A keen-eyed forager by nature, she should be ranging outdoors by day, perching at night, and enjoying cleansing dustbaths with her flock mates, a need so strong that she pathetically executes "vacuum" dustbathing on the wire floor of her cage.



"I can never not know that the chicken I absolutely saw is a sister ..."

Alice Walker,
author of *The Color Purple*

M. Friedman

RR 2 BX 37

Gilenville, MN 55103-037

Docket's Management Branch
Food & Drug Administration
Dept of Health & Human Services
12420 Parklawn Dr., Room 1-23
Rockville, MD 20857

